



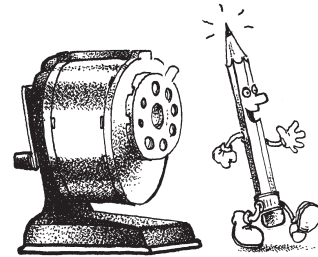
NOTES

INTERDEPENDENCY

Dependent and independent clauses

AN INDEPENDENT CLAUSE CAN STAND ON ITS OWN AS A complete thought. Put another way, it forms a sentence—it could, in fact, be a sentence, just the way it is:

Mr. Bingley finds you attractive.



A DEPENDENT CLAUSE, by contrast, will leave you hanging:

Since Mr. Bingley finds you attractive... (dependent)

—it forms a complete idea only when combined with an INDEPENDENT CLAUSE:

Since Mr. Bingley finds you attractive, (dependent)
we must invite him to dinner. (independent)

Examples

If you bring me the Golden Fleece, you may marry my daughter.

If you bring me the Golden Fleece, (dependent)
you may marry my daughter. (independent)

As soon as you look at her, you turn to stone.

As soon as you look at her, (dependent)
you turn to stone. (independent)

Exercise

Directions: Decide whether the group of words in bold is a DEPENDENT (D) or an INDEPENDENT (I) CLAUSE.

1. **If you fly too near the sun**, your wings will melt. _____
2. By the time we get to Rivendell, **it may be too late**. _____
3. Just as Merry and Pippin were about to begin their third breakfast, **there was a knock at the door**. _____
4. Anna enjoyed playing the game, **even though she didn't win**. _____
5. **Where there's smoke**, there's fire. _____
6. While Nero fiddled, **Rome burned**. _____
7. **Once we understood your idea**, we accepted it. _____
8. Even though my sister and I constantly fight, **we are very close**. _____
9. When Odysseus woke up, **he was alone on the beach**. _____

AT A GLANCE

An INDEPENDENT CLAUSE can stand on its own as a complete thought.

A DEPENDENT CLAUSE forms a complete thought only when combined with an INDEPENDENT CLAUSE.



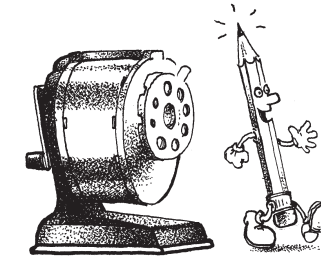
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AT A GLANCE

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WHY IT MATTERS

Here we're zeroing in on clauses, the point being that there's more than one *type* of clause — and the distinction turns out to be really useful to writers.

Equally important, these same distinctions turn out to be critical to certain punctuation decisions.



INTERDEPENDENCY

THE WRITER'S TOOLBOX

Ideas expressed in INDEPENDENT CLAUSES will carry more weight with readers than those expressed in DEPENDENT CLAUSES.

Writing guideline. When a sentence contains both a DEPENDENT and an INDEPENDENT CLAUSE, the emphasis will be on whichever idea you position in the INDEPENDENT CLAUSE. You should, accordingly, choose carefully *which idea you would rather emphasize* — and then position that idea in the INDEPENDENT CLAUSE.

Exercise

Directions: Rewrite the following sentences so that the idea currently in the DEPENDENT CLAUSE is expressed as an INDEPENDENT CLAUSE, and vice-versa.

REQUIREMENT: Begin each re-write with the new DEPENDENT CLAUSE.

10. While Nero fiddled, Rome burned.

11. Even though my sister and I constantly fight, we are very close.

12. While Anna didn't win, she really enjoyed playing the game.

13. While you may have a piece of chocolate cake for dessert, you will not be allowed to watch TV or play on the computer.



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10. While Nero fiddled, Rome burned.

While Rome burned, Nero fiddled.

11. Even though my sister and I constantly fight, we are very close.

Even though we are very close, my sister and I constantly fight.

12. While Anna didn't win, she really enjoyed playing the game.

Although she really enjoyed playing the game, Anna didn't win.

13. While you may have a piece of chocolate cake for dessert, you will not be allowed to watch TV or play on the computer.

While you will not be allowed to watch TV or play on the computer, you may have a piece of chocolate cake for dessert.

WHY IT MATTERS

[After the exercise, ask the students:]

Which of the following sentences would you rather hear?

[Make certain you have their attention; then read aloud:]

While you may have a piece of chocolate cake for dessert, you will not be allowed to watch TV or play on the computer.

—OR:

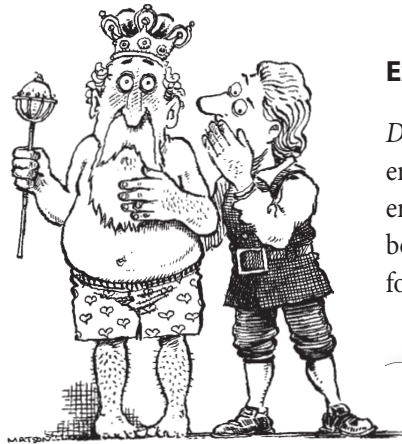
While you will not be allowed to watch TV or play on the computer, you may have a piece of chocolate cake for dessert.

Which would you rather hear? [Most will say the second version.] Yet each sentence contains precisely the same information.

*Think of the reader's attention as a spotlight, and that spotlight will always gravitate toward the **independent clause**. In the first version, the spotlight is on what you will not be allowed to do; the chocolate cake is in the shadows. The second version reverses the emphasis: the spotlight is on the chocolate cake. — In each version, the information is **identical**, yet the first sounds a bit negative, the second a bit positive.*

*The point: **Your grammatical choices can have a significant effect on the way your information is perceived.***

NUMBERS GAME — SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

**Exercise**

Directions: In the document below, identify any errors of SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT. For each error you find, use the margin at right to write both the SIMPLE SUBJECT and the *correct* VERB form dictated by that SUBJECT.

11 May 1437
Niedersachsen, Germany

To HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS EMPEROR FRANZ

Your Highness:

- 1 I am writing to express my concern about the tailors you hired last week
 - 2 and the new "clothes" they're designing for you. In raising these con-
 - 3 cerns, I do not mean to question Your Highness's judgment; I am merely
 - 4 concerned that we get the best bang for our imperial buck.
 - 5 Here, in brief, are my concerns:
 - 6 **Credibility.** These tailors claim to have created a new wardrobe for
 - 7 the Duchess of Saxony. However, I have spoken to the Duchess's staff.
 - 8 Neither her maidservants nor her clerk recall anything of the kind.
 - 9 **Cash advances.** The sum of gold marks originally agreed upon in
 - 10 lengthy negotiations with the tailors have almost been paid in full.
 - 11 So while they have received 90% of their fee, you have not a stitch to
 - 12 show for it!
 - 13 **"Materials."** They justified their huge advances in terms of expensive
 - 14 silks, gold buttons, embroidery, and other finery they claimed to need.
 - 15 The daily "deliveries" of this material has been carefully monitored by my
 - 16 manservant, who reports that the deliverymen enter with outstretched
 - 17 arms, as though carrying bolts of silk. In truth, they carry nothing!
 - 18 I hope these observations prove useful, Your Highness, and I remain —
- Your faithful servant,
Bruno Klemm
IMPERIAL AUDITS & ACCOUNTING

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Exercise based on Hans Christian Andersen's tale *The Emperor's New Clothes*.

KEY IDEA

In the real world, subject-verb agreement errors don't stand up and wave at us; they're *buried* in our writing.

So to catch these errors, you must scour each sentence for the subjects and verbs:

- find each subject first;
- locate any verbs based on that subject;
- then read the subject & verb *in tandem*.

ANSWERS:

clerk recalls

sum has

deliveries have

WHAT TO EMPHASIZE

Tell the students two things: 1) *What you're practicing here is a core skill — one you must use whenever you're reviewing a draft of your own writing. You must scan the entire document in search of your subjects and verbs.*

2) *This same challenge routinely shows up on standardized tests.*



NOTES

NUMBERS GAME — SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Exercise

Directions: In the following passage, correct any errors of SUBJECT-VERB agreement.

Custom Playgrounds for Luxury Homes

- 1 Across the country, there are new signs of life in residential playgrounds.
- 2 A national survey of more than a thousand home-architecture firms show
- 3 unprecedented demand for outdoor recreational equipment. The complexity
- 4 of decks, patios, verandas, and other outside spaces are increasing, and
- 5 luxury-home architects are also seeing growing interest in designer play
- 6 areas. The shift, according to industry experts, residential architects, and
- 7 real-estate professionals, reflect what's happening *indoors*: walls and the
- 8 notion of boxy, formal living space is falling out of favor. Developers today
- 9 are taking their cues from the resort industry, where the outdoors shines.

- 10 A group of builders in waterfront Malibu, Calif., where outdoor living is the
- 11 rule, are leading the charge. Developer Crystal Pointe Estates is selling, for
- 12 \$22.9 million, a 13,814-square-foot contemporary home with another 10,000
- 13 square feet of outdoor recreational space. The home, which was designed by
- 14 Cole & Associates, opens to an infinity-edge pool flanked by two ground-
- 15 level trampolines. The twin trampolines on the westward-facing side of
- 16 the house offers a panoramic view of the Pacific. Adjacent to them lies an
- 17 outdoor yoga and massage room where guests may regain their strength.

- 18 Equally extravagant is the play area outside Rob Stryker's Lake Michigan
- 19 home. It isn't just big: stretching three stories high and measuring
- 20 about 6,000 square feet, it's got its own rock-climbing wall. The rock wall
- 21 occupying the north- and east-facing sides of the play tower provide the
- 22 only access point to the rooftop trampoline. The three platforms that form
- 23 the tower, perched on a dune overlooking the lake, includes a high-speed
- 24 merry-go-round, a resistance-swimming pool, and a set of rope swings.

- 25 Stryker's recreation tower is central to his home. The 40-acre property's
- 26 steep slope and unique arrangement makes for magnificent lake views, but
- 27 difficult construction. The tower's four vertical support beams balanced atop
- 28 the uneven terrain connects via steel cables to the home's foundation. The
- 29 limestone and copper house with 12-foot walls of sliding glass adhere to a
- 30 Japanese contemporary style.

- 31 While unique features can make for impressive homes, they can also limit
- 32 the pool of prospective buyers. The return on investments in luxury play
- 33 areas vary greatly depending on the market, said Kevin Kegan, the editor-in-
- 34 chief of *Residential* magazine.



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Directions: In the following passage, correct any errors of SUBJECT-VERB agreement.

Custom Playgrounds for Luxury Homes

- KEY IDEA**
Errors of subject-verb agreement can be hard to spot, so writers must set aside time for proofreading and editing.
- ANSWERS:**
- survey shows
complexity is
shift reflects
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group is
trampolines offer
wall provides
platforms include
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house adheres
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